Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 August 2015

2015 session
Agenda item 9

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 19 June 2015

[*on a proposal considered in plenary meeting (E/2015/L.15)*]

2015/14. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, and recalling other relevant resolutions of the Assembly and relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming also the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance, and the need for all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect those principles,

Recalling its decision 2015/210 of 15 May 2015, in which it decided that the theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of its 2015 session would be "The future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness" and that it would convene two panel discussions under the segment,

Expressing deep concern at the increasing challenges to Member States, the United Nations and their capacity caused by the impact of climate change, the ongoing consequences of the financial and economic crisis, regional food crises, continuing food and energy insecurity, water scarcity, epidemics, natural hazards and environmental degradation, which are adding to underdevelopment, poverty and inequality and are increasing the vulnerability of people while reducing their ability to cope with humanitarian crises, emphasizing the need for resources for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and humanitarian assistance, including in developing countries, to be provided efficiently and effectively, and emphasizing also the need for development and humanitarian actors to work better together to strengthen resilience, including urban resilience, in terms of prevention, preparedness and response,

Expressing grave concern at the unprecedented number of people affected and displaced by humanitarian emergencies, including frequently protracted displacement resulting from humanitarian emergencies, which are increasing in number, scale and severity and are stretching humanitarian response capacities, recognizing the need for burden-sharing, and noting with appreciation efforts at the

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national and international levels that promote national capacity-building to address complex challenges in this regard,

Noting with great concern that violence, including sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, continues to be deliberately directed against civilian populations in emergency situations and that civilians remain the main victims of violations of international humanitarian law committed by parties to armed conflicts,

Condemning all attacks, threats and other acts of violence against humanitarian personnel, including medical personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their facilities, equipment, transports and supplies, and expressing deep concern at the consequences of such attacks for the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations,

Emphasizing that building and strengthening resilience at the local, national and regional levels is critical to reducing the impact of disasters and vulnerabilities to hazards and, in this regard, while recognizing that building resilience is a long-term development process, stressing the need for enhanced investment in building national capacities for preparedness, prevention, mitigation and response, particularly in developing countries,

Recognizing the clear relationship between emergency response, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, and reaffirming that, in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, emergency assistance will be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development and that emergency measures should be accompanied by development measures as a step towards the sustainable development of affected States, and in this regard highlighting the importance of closer cooperation between national stakeholders, including the private sector, as appropriate, and humanitarian and development actors,

Reaffirming that the specific needs and capacities of women, girls, men and boys of different ages, including persons with disabilities, must be mainstreamed into humanitarian assistance programming at all stages in a comprehensive and consistent manner,

Recognizing that Member States and the United Nations system need to continue their efforts, including through strengthening partnerships at all levels with relevant stakeholders, in support of national efforts, while ensuring that their collaborative efforts adhere to humanitarian principles,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[1]

2. *Encourages* United Nations humanitarian organizations and other relevant organizations, while strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the field, to continue to work in close coordination with national Governments, taking into account the primary role of the affected State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of such assistance within its territory;

3. *Encourages* the United Nations to continue to strengthen coordination, preparedness and response efforts and to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action, including through enhancing complementarity with and

[1] A/70/77-E/2015/64.

between relevant stakeholders, such as affected Governments, regional organizations, donors, development organizations, civil society and the private sector, involved in response efforts to make use of their comparative advantages and resources;

4. *Stresses* that the United Nations system should continue to enhance existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, including, as appropriate, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries, encourages the international community, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions and organizations to support national authorities in their capacity-building programmes, including through technical cooperation and long-term partnerships, as well as by strengthening their capacity to build resilience, mitigate disaster risks and prepare for and respond to disasters, and also encourages Member States to create and strengthen an enabling environment for the capacity-building of their national and local authorities, national societies of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in providing timely humanitarian assistance;

5. *Encourages* humanitarian and development organizations, in consultation with Governments, to consider, where appropriate, common risk-management and resilience objectives, achievable through joint assessment, analysis, planning, programming and funding and increased investment in preparedness, conducted in line with humanitarian principles, in order to reduce suffering and losses and the overall impact of humanitarian crises, and in this regard emphasizes that transitions from humanitarian response to longer-term development need to be planned over a multi-year framework, as appropriate, and linked with development planning processes, while integrating key stakeholders, such as Governments, regional organizations and international financial institutions, as appropriate;

6. *Also encourages* humanitarian and development organizations to consider applying, in coordination with national authorities, risk-management tools in order to allow for better use of baseline information and risk analysis, including analysis of the underlying causes of crises, the different vulnerabilities of countries and regions and the risk exposures of affected populations, and in this regard notes the further development of established tools, such as the Index for Risk Management, to include more data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, and information regarding national and regional contexts, taking into account the environmental impact;

7. *Encourages* United Nations agencies and international organizations to continue to improve the humanitarian programme cycle, including the development of coordinated needs assessment tools, such as the multisector initial rapid assessment, in consultation with the affected States, in order to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian action and to ensure that humanitarian emergency risk analysis is embedded at the core of humanitarian strategic planning, encourages international humanitarian organizations and relevant actors to continue to work with national and local authorities as well as with civil society and affected populations, and recognizes the role of affected communities in identifying urgent needs and requirements in order to ensure an efficient response;

8. *Welcomes* the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015[2] and its areas of focus, including on enhancing disaster risk reduction, resilience and preparedness, in order to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

9. *Encourages* Member States, as well as relevant regional and international organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to continue to support adaptation to the effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including those related to the continuing impact of climate change, especially for those countries that are particularly vulnerable;

10. *Encourages* the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to further strengthen their efforts in supporting national Governments in mapping emergency preparedness and response capacities at the country and regional levels, in order to better facilitate the complementarity of disaster response efforts between national and international capacities, and in this regard encourages Member States to promote, as appropriate, the implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance and to integrate risk management into national development plans;

11. *Requests* Member States, relevant organizations and other relevant actors to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all stages of humanitarian response through addressing the specific needs, challenges and coping capacities of women, girls, men and boys on an equal basis, taking into consideration age and disability, including through the improved collection, analysis, reporting and use of data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, and taking into account information provided by affected States, and to ensure the full participation of women in decision-making processes in order to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian action, and encourages greater use of the gender marker and other monitoring tools throughout the humanitarian programme cycle;

12. *Encourages* Member States, in cooperation with relevant United Nations humanitarian organizations, to ensure reliable and safe access to sexual and reproductive health-care services in order to protect women and adolescent girls and infants from preventable mortality and morbidity;

13. *Urges* Member States to continue to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies, calls upon Member States and relevant organizations to strengthen support services for victims and survivors of such violence, and also calls for a more effective response in that regard;

14. *Encourages* Member States, in cooperation with relevant United Nations humanitarian organizations, to ensure that the basic humanitarian needs of affected populations, including clean water, food, shelter, health, including sexual and reproductive health, education and protection, are addressed as components of humanitarian response, including through providing timely and adequate resources, while ensuring that their collaborative efforts fully adhere to humanitarian principles;

[2] General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II

15. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to continue to work together to understand and address the different protection needs of affected populations, particularly the most vulnerable, in humanitarian crises and ensure that these needs are adequately integrated into preparedness, response and recovery efforts;

16. *Urges* Member States to continue to take the steps necessary to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, including medical personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their facilities, equipment, transports and supplies operating within their borders, and in other territories under their effective control, requests the Secretary-General to expedite his efforts to enhance the safety and security of personnel involved in United Nations humanitarian operations, and urges Member States to ensure that perpetrators of crimes committed against humanitarian personnel on their territory or in other territories under their effective control are held accountable, as provided for by national laws and in accordance with their obligations under international law;

17. *Reaffirms* the importance of ensuring safe and enabling learning environments and quality education in humanitarian emergencies, in particular for the well-being of all girls and boys, to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development, and in this regard reiterates the need to protect and respect educational facilities in accordance with international humanitarian law and strongly condemns all attacks directed against schools in contravention of international humanitarian law;

18. *Requests* Member States to strengthen their efforts to ensure better protection of and assistance for internally displaced persons, in particular to address the long-term nature of displacement, by adopting and implementing policies and strategies in accordance with national and regional frameworks, while recognizing the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement[3] as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, and in this regard recognizes the central role of national and local authorities and institutions in addressing the specific needs of internally displaced persons and in finding solutions to displacement through, inter alia, continued and enhanced international support, upon request, for the capacity-building of States;

19. *Calls upon* Member States, relevant organizations and actors to recognize and address the consequences of humanitarian emergencies for migrants and to strengthen coordinated international efforts for their assistance and protection in concert with national authorities;

20. *Requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue to lead the efforts to strengthen the coordination, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian assistance through, inter alia, continued and enhanced dialogue with Member States, including on the processes, activities and decisions of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and encourages Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental organizations and all other relevant actors to continue to work and improve cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to ensure effective and efficient delivery of the humanitarian response to affected people;

[3] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

21. *Recognizes* that accountability is an integral part of effective humanitarian assistance, and emphasizes the need to enhance the accountability of humanitarian actors at all stages of humanitarian assistance;

22. *Calls upon* the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to enhance accountability to Member States, including affected States, and all other stakeholders, and to further strengthen humanitarian response efforts, including by monitoring and evaluating the provision of their humanitarian assistance, incorporating lessons learned into programming and consulting with the affected populations so that their needs are appropriately addressed;

23. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations system and humanitarian and development organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to support Member States, in particular developing countries, in promoting innovation through, inter alia, increasing investment in research and development leading to innovation and access to information and communications technologies, and to identify, promote and integrate best practices and lessons learned with regard to, inter alia, partnerships, procurement, collaboration and coordination between agencies and organizations, and in this regard notes the importance of promoting and supporting innovation and developing local capacities as a priority and welcomes innovative practices that draw on the knowledge of people affected by humanitarian emergencies to develop locally sustainable solutions and to produce life-saving items locally, with minimum logistical and infrastructure implications;

24. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflicts to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law;

25. *Calls upon* all States and parties to comply with the provisions of international humanitarian law, including all the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,[4] in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, in order to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories, and in this regard urges the international community and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen humanitarian assistance to civilians in those situations;

26. *Urges* all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance to fully commit to and duly respect the guiding principles contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182, including the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality as well as the principle of independence, as recognized by the Assembly in its resolution 58/114 of 17 December 2003;

27. *Calls upon* all States and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment in order to allow humanitarian personnel to perform efficiently their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

28. *Requests* the United Nations to continue to identify solutions to strengthen its ability to recruit and deploy appropriately senior, skilled and experienced humanitarian staff quickly and flexibly, giving paramount consideration to the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, while paying due regard to gender equality and to recruiting on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and in this regard requests the Secretary General to address further the insufficient diversity in geographical representation and gender balance in the composition of humanitarian staff of the United Nations, in particular regarding professional and high-level staff;

29. *Encourages* efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination of United Nations humanitarian entities, other relevant humanitarian organizations and donor countries with the affected States, recognizes that humanitarian assistance should be provided in ways that are supportive of early recovery, sustainable rehabilitation, reconstruction and long-term development, and recalls that early recovery requires timely, effective and predictable funding through humanitarian and development financing, as appropriate, to meet enduring humanitarian, recovery and post-crises priorities while simultaneously building national and local capacities;

30. *Recognizes* that funding needs to be more flexible to allow for a complementary approach in order to effectively and sufficiently address the immediate needs of all affected populations in emergency situations, including for underfunded and forgotten emergencies and those of a long-term nature, and the underlying causes of crises, and encourages Member States, the United Nations system, the private sector and other relevant entities to provide adequate funding and investment in preparedness and resilience-building, including from humanitarian and development budgets, as well as unearmarked core funding and flexible funding for multi-year appeals, in order to bridge the divide between humanitarian and development financing;

31. *Stresses* the need to enhance resource mobilization efforts to address the increasing capacity and resource gap, including through additional contributions from non-traditional donors, exploring innovative mechanisms, such as the utilization of risk-informed anticipatory decision-making, flexible funding for multi-year appeals through existing tools such as consolidated and flash appeals, the Central Emergency Response Fund and other funds, such as the country-based pooled funds, and to continue to broaden partnerships and the donor base in order to increase the predictability and effectiveness of funding, and to promote South-South and horizontal and triangular cooperation globally, and in this regard encourages, as appropriate, Member States to contribute to the humanitarian appeals brought forward by the United Nations;

32. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold the first World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016, aimed at sharing knowledge and best practices in the humanitarian field to improve the coordination, capacity and effectiveness of humanitarian response, and requests the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to continue to ensure an inclusive, consultative and transparent preparatory process that includes the participation and contributions of Member States and stakeholders in the process and outcome of the Summit, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to further engage with Member States in the process and outcome of the Summit;

33. *Requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;

34. *Requests* the Presidents of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to continue their efforts with a view to eliminating duplication between the resolutions of the Council and the Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, while promoting their complementarity.

40th plenary meeting
19 June 2015